

Department of Veterans Affairs

§21.7120

COURSES

§21.7120 Courses included in programs of education.

(a) *General.* Generally, VA will approve, and will authorize payment of educational assistance, for the individual's enrollment in any course or subject which a State approving agency has approved as provided in §21.7220 of this part and which forms a part of a program of education as defined in §21.7020(b)(23) of this part. Restrictions on this general rule are stated in §21.7222(b) of this part, however.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3002(3), 3452; Pub. L. 98-525)

(b) *Avocational and recreational courses are restricted.* (1) VA will not pay educational assistance for an enrollment in any course—

(i) Which is avocational or recreational in character, or

(ii) The advertising for which contains significant avocational or recreational themes.

(2) VA presumes that the following courses are avocational or recreational in character unless the veteran or servicemember justifies their pursuit to VA as provided in paragraph (b)(3) of this section. The courses are:

(i) Any photography course or entertainment course, or

(ii) Any music course, instrumental or vocal, public speaking course or courses in dancing, sports or athletics, such as horseback riding, swimming, fishing, skiing, golf, baseball, tennis, bowling, sports officiating, or other sport or athletic courses, except courses of applied music, physical education, or public speaking which are offered by institutions of higher learning for credit as an integral part of a program leading to an educational objective, or

(iii) Any other type of course which VA determines to be avocational or recreational.

(3) To overcome the presumption that a course is avocational or recreational in character, the veteran or servicemember must establish that the course will be of bona fide use in the

pursuit of his or her present or contemplated business or occupation.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3034, 3473; Pub. L. 98-525)

(c) *Flight training.* (1) VA may pay educational assistance for an enrollment in a flight training course—

(i) When an institution of higher learning offers the course for credit toward the standard college degree the veteran or servicemember is pursuing; or

(ii) When—

(A) A flight school is offering the course,

(B) The State approving agency and the Federal Aviation Administration have approved the course,

(C) The course of flight training is generally accepted as necessary to attain a recognized vocational objective in the field of aviation which the veteran or servicemember is pursuing, and

(D) The training for which payment is made occurred after September 29, 1990.

(2) VA will not pay educational assistance for an enrollment in a flight training course which the veteran or servicemember is pursuing as ancillary training for a vocation other than aviation.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3034(f))

(d) *Independent study.* (1) Except as provided in paragraph (d)(2) of this section, effective October 29, 1992, VA may pay educational assistance to a veteran or servicemember who is enrolled in a nonaccredited course or unit subject offered entirely or partly by independent study only if—

(i) Successful completion of the non-accredited course or unit subject is required in order for the veteran or servicemember to complete his or her program of education,

(ii) On October 29, 1992, the veteran or servicemember was receiving educational assistance for pursuit of the program of education of which the non-accredited independent study course or unit subject forms a part, and

(iii) The veteran or servicemember has remained continuously enrolled in the program of education of which the nonaccredited independent study course or unit subject forms a part

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from October 29, 1992, to the date of enrollment by the veteran or servicemember in the nonaccredited independent study course or unit subject.

(2) Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (d)(1) of this section, VA may pay educational assistance to a veteran or servicemember for enrollment in a course or unit subject offered by independent study which, though part of an approved program of education, is not required in order for the veteran or servicemember to complete the program of education (*i.e.*, an elective) when—

(i) The veteran or servicemember was enrolled in and receiving educational assistance for the course or unit subject on October 29, 1992, and

(ii) The veteran or servicemember remains continuously enrolled in the course or unit subject.

(3) Whether or not the veteran or servicemember is enrolled will be determined by the regularly prescribed standards and practices of the educational institution offering the course or unit subject.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3014, 3034, 3076, 3680A(a); sec. 313(b), Pub. L. 102–568, 106 Stat. 4333)

[53 FR 1757, Jan. 22, 1988, as amended at 53 FR 3207, Feb. 4, 1988; 57 FR 15024, Apr. 24, 1992; 61 FR 6788, Feb. 22, 1996; 61 FR 29297, June 10, 1996]

§ 21.7122 Courses precluded.

(a) *Unapproved courses.* The provisions of this section which refer to a State approving agency will be deemed to refer to VA with respect to a State when that State does not have and fails or declines to create or designate a State approving agency; or fails to enter into an agreement as provided in § 21.4153 (see § 21.4150(c)). Except for payment of tuition assistance top-up, VA will not pay educational assistance for:

(1) An enrollment in any course that a State approving agency has not approved;

(2) A new enrollment in a course while a State approving agency has suspended the course for new enrollments;

(3) Any period within an enrollment in a course if the period occurs after

the date a State approving agency disapproves the course; or

(4) Taking a licensing or certification test after the date a State approving agency disapproves the test. See § 21.7220.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3014(b), 3034, 3672)

(b) *Courses outside a program of education.* VA will not pay educational assistance for an enrollment in any course that is not part of a program of education unless the veteran or servicemember is enrolled in:

(1) A refresher course (including a course which will permit the veteran or servicemember to update knowledge and skills or be instructed in the technological advances which have occurred in the veteran's or servicemember's field of employment);

(2) A deficiency course;

(3) A preparatory, special education, or training course necessary to enable the veteran or servicemember to pursue an approved program of education; or

(4) A course for which the veteran or servicemember is seeking tuition assistance top-up.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 3002(3), 3014(b), 3034, 3452(b))

(c) *Erroneous, deceptive, misleading practices.* (1) VA will not pay educational assistance for:

(i) An enrollment in any course offered by an educational institution that uses advertising, sales, or enrollment practices that are erroneous, deceptive, or misleading by actual statement, omission, or intimation.

(ii) Taking a licensing or certification test if the organization or entity offering the test uses advertising or sales practices, or candidate handbooks, that are erroneous, deceptive, or misleading by actual statement, omission, or intimation.

(2) VA will apply the provisions of § 21.4252(h) in making these payment decisions.

(Authority: 3034, 3689(d), 3696)

(d) *Restrictions on enrollment: percentage of students receiving financial support.* Except as otherwise provided VA shall not approve an enrollment in any